



## ***House Concurrent Resolution 11***

*"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."*

- *Nelson Mandela*

The ACLU of Michigan opposes House Concurrent Resolution 11.

HCR 11 is a thinly veiled attempt to undermine the United States ratification of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child. The UNCRC has been ratified by every nation in the world besides the United States and Somalia. Many nations have used this document to guide the development and implementation of policies and programs that are specifically designed to meet the needs of children and families.

Children in the United States continue to face considerable hardships, including insufficient health care, inadequate educational opportunities, and high rates of poverty, abuse and neglect, hunger, infant mortality, incarceration, adolescent pregnancy, homicide, suicide, and firearm-related deaths.

In Michigan, the 2009 infant mortality rate was 7.8 deaths per 1,000 births. This rate is worse than the national average of 6.7 and has remained higher than the national average over the last 20 years. The percentage of Michigan children living in poverty is at 23%, up 64% since the year 2000 and well above the National average. Over 200,000 juveniles are serving time in adult prisons. In Michigan, youth as young as ten years old are being pushed in the criminal justice system because of harmful and over-reactive zero tolerance policies in our schools.

The United States ratification of the UNCRC would help embolden the United States to address these egregious failings of our nation to adequately protect the rights of children in these instances.

Because we support children and families we must reject HCR 11 and any attempt to undermine or delay the ratification of the UNCRC. We urge you to vote 'no' on HCR 11.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to Shelli Weisberg, the Legislative Director of the ACLU of Michigan at (248) 535-7112 or [sweisberg@aclumich.org](mailto:sweisberg@aclumich.org).